Gulf of Mexico Harmful Algal Bloom Bulletin

22 September 2005

National Ocean Service

National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service

Last bulletin: September 21, 2005

Conditions: A harmful algal bloom has been identified onshore from southern Pinellas to Collier County. Today through Monday patchy very low to low impacts are possible along the coast from southern Pinellas to Collier County, with moderate to high impacts possible in bayside areas of southern Pinellas County. A harmful algal bloom has also been identified in the Florida Panhandle from Bay County east to Levy County. Patchy moderate impacts are possible in Bay and Gulf Counties through Saturday, with patchy very low to low impacts Sunday and Monday. Very low to low impacts are possible in Wakulla and Franklin Counties, with very low impacts possible in Dixie and Levy Counties through Monday. Dead fish were reported at Lido Beach in northern Sarasota County over the last day. Dead fish smell, while unpleasant, does not produce the same respiratory irritation as red tide.

Analysis: The ongoing bloom persists along the coast of Southwest Florida, extending onshore from southern Pinellas County to southern Collier County. Recent sampling (September 19; FWC/FWRI) continued to confirm offshore extension of the bloom west of Clearwater (medium to high counts). Satellite imagery analysis is limited as Hurricane Rita passes through the Gulf of Mexico. Wind transport modeling suggests the bloom may extend 35-55 km north of its previous location on September 18. Dead fish were reported in southern Sarasota County in the past day. Strong offshore winds will minimize effects at the beach through the weekend. However, upwelling conditions are favorable and intensification of the bloom is highly possible. Offshore and northerly transport and/or expansion of the bloom is also expected. Continual reports of discolored water are likely as resuspension occurs.

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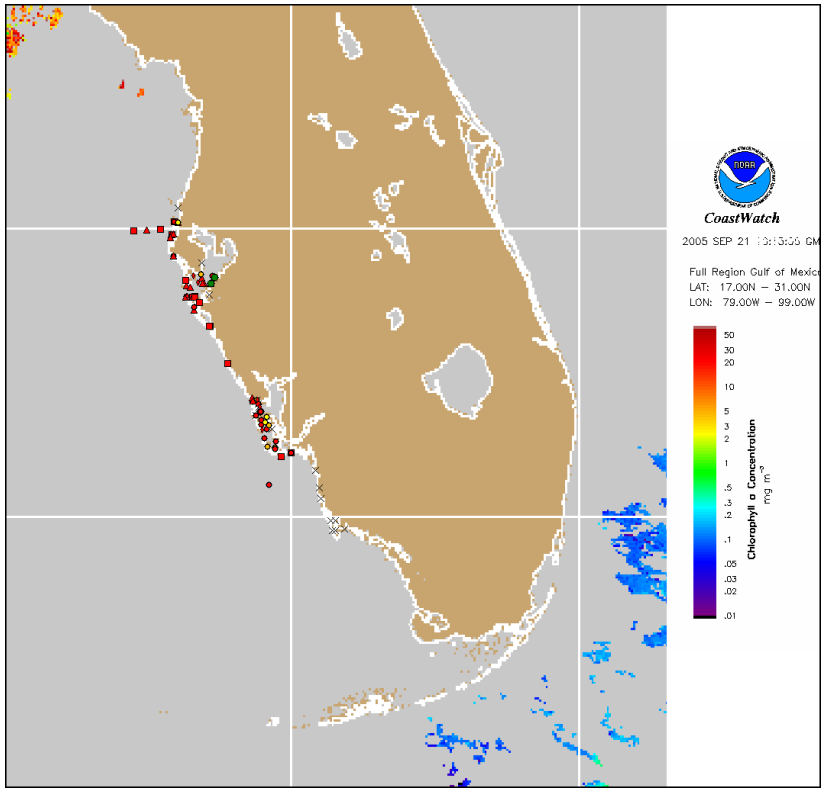
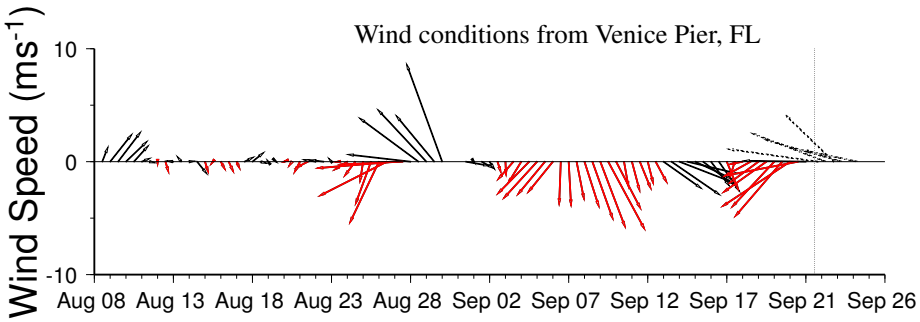
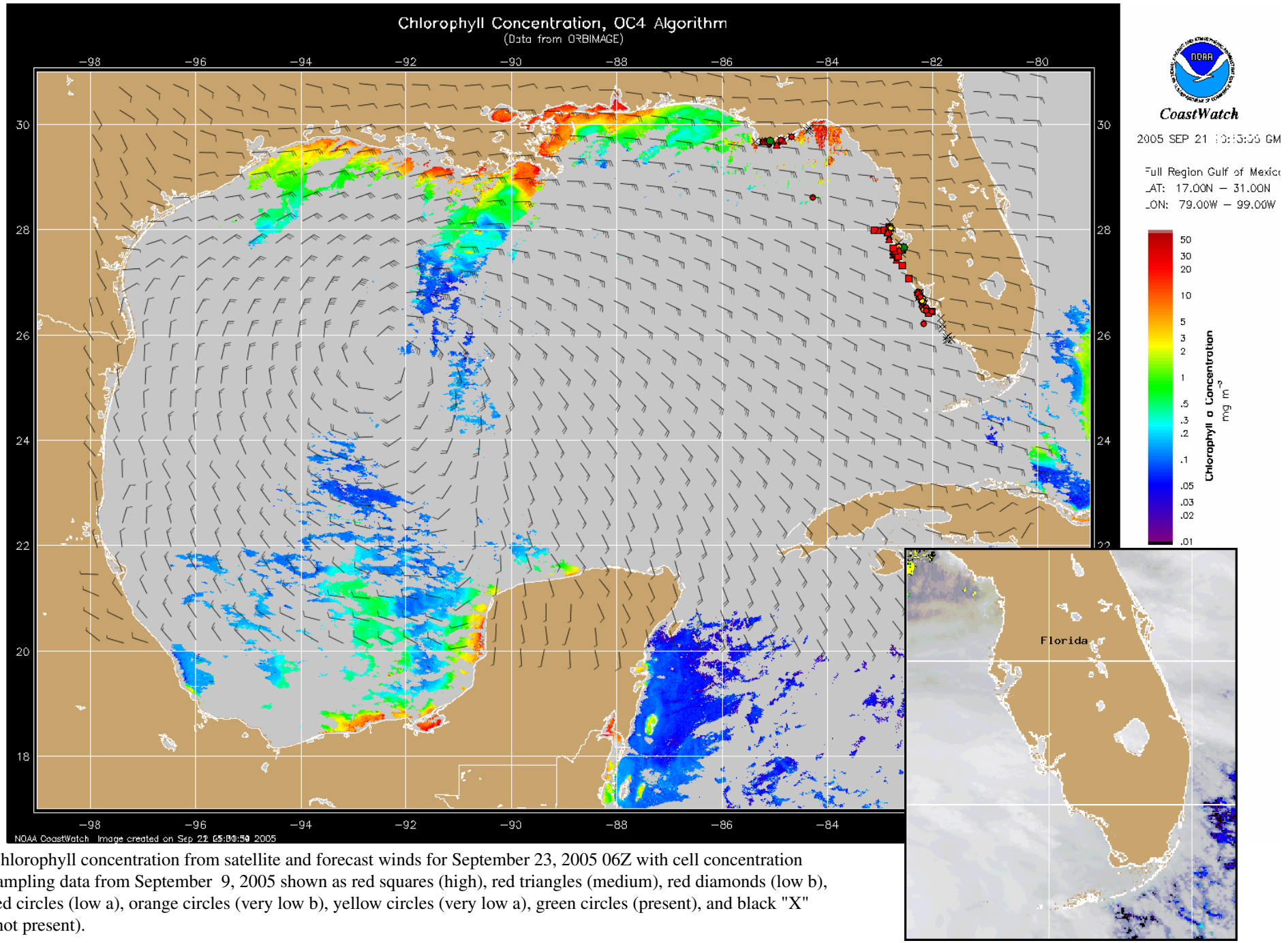


Chlorophyll concentration from satellite with HAB areas shown by red polygon(s). Cell concentration sampling data from September 9, 2005 shown as red squares (high), red triangles (medium), red diamonds (low b), red circles (low a), orange circles (very low b), yellow circles (very low a), green circles (present), and black "X" (not present).



Wind speed and direction are averaged over 12 hours from measurements made on buoys. Length of line indicates speed; angle indicates direction. Red indicates that the wind direction favors upwelling near the coast. Values to the left of the dotted vertical line are measured values; values to the right are forecasts.

SW Florida: Strong 20-25 knot (10-13 m/s) easterlies and southeasterlies will predominate today through Sunday, with weakening to 15 knots (8 m/s) beginning Saturday night. Northeasterlies (10 knots, 5 m/s) expected Monday.



Chlorophyll concentration from satellite and forecast winds for September 23, 2005 06Z with cell concentration sampling data from September 9, 2005 shown as red squares (high), red triangles (medium), red diamonds (low b), red circles (low a), orange circles (very low b), yellow circles (very low a), green circles (present), and black "X" (not present).

Blooms shown in red (see p. 1 analysis)